introduce Rajdhani Express (weekly) and Ashram Express (daily) during August' 1997. Introduction of additional trains between Delhi and Ahmedabad is not proposed presently due to operational and resource constraints.

Issuance of I-cards to blind Railway hawkers in Mumbai

462. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to issue I-cards for blind Railway hawkers in Mumbai;

(b) if so, the details of the plan; and

(c) by when it will be initiated?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Contract for the Supply of Wooden Sleepers

463. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given contract to private parties to supply wooden sleepers for Railways; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Entry of Unauthorised Travellers in Reserved Compartments

464. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to a nexus between the coach attendants/TTEs, a racket of allowing unsuthorised travellers to enter the reserved compartments specially during nights is going on in the indian Railways;

(b) whether any raids have been conducted in the moving trains during nights;

(c) if so, what are the findings thereof; and

(d) in what manner Government propose to stop this illegal practice of extorting money from travellers?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Some incidents of unauthorised persons entering the reserved compartments have come to notice. Surprise checks are conducted regularly by the Commercial and Vigilance departments of the Railways along with the Railway Protection Force/ Government Railway Police personnel in the trains during the day and night hours. However, convenience of the reserved passengers is kept in mind while conducting these checks at night. In 1997-98 (upto May, 1997), 1.97 lakh checks have been conducted and 16.07 lakh persons were appredhended travelling without/with improper ticket and a sum of Rs. 18.11 crores realised from them as railway dues.

(d) All out efforts are made to ensure that passengers without confirmed reserved tickets do not enter reserved coaches. The ticket checking staff detrain such passengers with the assistance of the Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police staff available on the train or are detrained at the next station. In addition, these unauthorised passengers are charged fare and penalty in